

THE PROBLEM OF OUR RACIAL AND NATIONAL SAFETY.

By PROFESSOR W. RIDGEWAY.

PROFESSOR RIDGEWAY delivered a lecture on the above subject before the Eugenics Education Society on Thursday, May 6th. In 1908, in an address to Section H. of the British Association (on the Application of Zoological Laws to Man), he had pointed out the great danger to the nation resulting from the present conditions under which the masses of the most unfit were encouraged to increase at the expense of the middle classes, who tended steadily to decrease in proportion, and that as the middle classes were the result of a long process of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, and were constantly being reinforced by the best of the working classes, they were the backbone of the race and nation, standing between the very rich on the one hand and the very poor on the other; and he had pointed out the danger of their being crushed out between the millionaire and the mob, bought, as in America, by the money of the former. The danger to the best element in the nation had been aggravated since then; and at the present moment the policy of our rulers was threatening the best element with a terrible reduction in order to preserve the most unfit, and, if our present system was adhered to, the British population would eventually consist of those sprung from many generations of the most unfit. If this calamity should come to pass it would be due to our refusing to look facts in the face, and to the scorning of the lessons of history and the laws which inexorably regulate nature. The nation, he said, had been brought into the present life and death struggle by a combination between millionaires (frequently aliens in origin), and their dupes, the masses, whilst the same forces are exercising a baneful influence on the prosecution of the war.

Certain of these alien and native plutocrats not only made great contributions to their regular party funds, but had encouraged and financed the attacks upon the ancient British aristocracy, partly through social jealousy, partly because they knew that so long as the ancient leaders of the nation survived, they could not attain to the same degree of power over the masses and thereby over the destinies of the country for their own selfish ends, such as was wielded by the millionaires in America. That certain plutocrats were at present exercising a most malign influence upon the conduct of the war seemed more than probable. There were many acts of the Government : the refusal to deal properly with the Spy question, the case of a German Baron, declared by a Minister to be well known for his English predilections and within a few days proved to be an emissary of the German Foreign Office ; the danger of a rising in India owing to the extraordinary success of the *Emden*, which was due to another Minister permitting the German Consul at Colombo to remain at large, and thereby communicate to the *Emden* the movements of British ships, and the like treatment of Germans at Singapore, who not only were able also to signal to that ship, but were allowed to organise the mutiny of native troops in that city. One, or two, or three such incidents might be ascribed to carelessness or stupidity, but when they amounted to hundreds, they pointed to the regular action of some occult force. But as history shows in all such cases, that occult force is money.

As there was a good *prima facie* case for believing that the war was mainly due to plutocrats, both alien and native, and was possibly being protracted by their influence, he examined the causes of the present war, not for captious but for important practical reasons. It could not be said that it was due to a Jingo Government, for it had come upon us under the domination of a party whose main plank for thirty-five years had been Peace, even at any price. The Pacificists seek to throw the blame for the war on the Kaiser and military autocracy, and urge that if Europe consisted entirely of democracies there would be no more wars, especially if all negotiations between States were carried on publicly by the "people." He

(Professor Ridgeway) had shown the falsity of this doctrine both from history and from the behaviour of modern democracies, and the facts showed that the modern democracies, like their ancient and mediæval prototypes, were more prone to internal disorders and to foreign aggression than monarchies and oligarchies, *e.g.*, the annexations and conquests made by England, France, and the United States since 1880. The modern democrat differs hardly more than in his clothes from his forerunners, since he has the same fighting instinct, the same greed, avarice and ambition (as strong in demagogues as in Kaisers) as his prototypes, with an hypocrisy all his own.

He had also given reasons for believing that a world full of democracies, and at perfect peace, would mean the death of all that is noblest. Every serious student knew that all the great civilisations of the world were cradled in the shield and had for their toys the spear and sword, and it was amid the din of arms that they reached their glorious prime. So great a lover of peace as Ruskin fully realised this great truth. When these nations sank into peace and ease they entered on their downward grade. If there was no struggle for existence in the States of Europe, the masses would become mere lazzaroni who would tax to death the middle classes, and thus only the dregs of the race would be left. He had argued thus because, although some Pacificists, warned by the misfortunes of Belgium, were driven to say that this was a righteous war, they kept proclaiming that it was going to be the last war, for when it was finished the Hague Conventions would be extended and properly enforced by an international police. How this police would be composed and controlled they did not say, though some of them apparently would like to entrust the duty to Germany to save her "from revengeful thoughts." But far from this being the last war, the hard facts pointed rather to its being the first of a vast series of struggles different from those yet known. The earth's waste spaces were now getting filled up, and the struggle for existence, and not mere kingly ambitions, was the great stake for which Germans and British were now fighting. Henceforward each new struggle would be more desperate, like that

between men on a raft, with only one keg of water and one bag of biscuits, when the weakest must go overboard. He next spoke of the purging effects of war. War, with all its awful horrors, yet does some good by purging a nation, rousing feelings for others in those hitherto absolutely selfish, and bringing men and things into their true proportions.

For the last ten months the nation has had its eyes fixed not on prating politicians, but the brave men who by land and sea are shielding their country from devastation. War is as inevitable as other great natural convulsions: earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, inundations of the sea, all of which perform a useful, though awful, function in nature. Against most of these man is helpless, but he can in some degree ward off others, as, for instance, inroads of the sea, by erecting great barriers, which may avert disaster for long periods, though at last comes the inevitable hour. So, too, may we avoid wars for a time, by maintaining proper barriers, and these are fleets and armies. If a Dutch politician persuaded his countrymen to allow their dykes to fall into disrepair, saying that they were costly, that they were quite sound, and that the sea had lost its ancient fury in that region, on him would rest the guilt of the lives lost in the great cataclysm when it came.

Up to last year the Pacificists held that England would never again be involved in a foreign war, unless by a Jingo Government, for the Hague Conventions framed and signed had ended all risk. A year ago Mr. Lloyd George (now labouring to provide munitions) said: "This is the most favourable moment for twenty years to overhaul our expenditure on armaments," while Sir John Brunner, amidst shouts of applause, told the National Liberal Federation that as a commercial man he infinitely preferred the protection of international law to that of our Navy. The political economists declared that civilised nations were so interlocked by mercantile and financial interests that European war was impossible. Why then did war come? It was not because we offended Germany, but because of the base and cringing behaviour of our dominant party, the doctrine preached shamelessly by individuals, that we must not change our tariff because of Germany, and that

we must not strengthen our Army (as Lord Roberts urged) because Germany would not like it. The fact is that the plutocratic Pacificists who controlled the party funds and financed even individuals, for reasons of their own, kept the country unprepared, and promises were made to Germany that we would not go to war with her, no matter what she did. Bernhardi, who voiced all Germany, proves that this war was due to our Pacificists, for he told us openly that we were a base and degraded nation, ready to be the prey of any valiant assailant. Clearly then, it was not the patriotic party in England that had brought on this war, but the Pacificists. Who are the Pacificists? First the Quakers, with whom peace is a fundamental tenet, and this canker of Quakerism has tainted other Nonconformist bodies, especially Congregationalists and Baptists (though he gladly stated that at the present moment there were gallant members of the last two communities in arms), whilst the Wesleyans (Welsh Calvinistic excepted) had kept their manhood as a whole unimpaired. The report of the Army Council (November, 1914) shows the strength of the denominations thus: Church of England 70%, Roman Catholics 14, Presbyterians 7, Wesleyans 4, Baptists and Congregationalists 1·2, other Protestants '6, Jews '08, and of course no Quakers. The evidence from recruiting, as far as it can be ascertained, points strongly to the same conclusion. One example must here suffice. A newly-raised battalion of the Welsh Fusiliers, quartered for four months in Cambridge, had in it very few professing Nonconformists. If it be urged, as is often done by Nonconformists, that this small proportion is due to the fact that many of their brethren put themselves down as Churchmen when they join, not only would this be a calumny on these gallant men who have come forward to risk their lives for their country, but it can be shown to be untrue, since, on Easter Sunday morning, no less than three hundred of that battalion received the Communion in Jesus College Chapel. In view of the well known small proportion of communicants, especially among young men, this fact proves incontrovertibly that the great majority of this Welsh battalion were, as stated, genuine members of the Established Church.

Now a nation composed entirely of Quakers and the other Pacifist sects could not exist, and they thus are mere parasites, and have no more right to direct the policy of England than the ticks on a dog's back have to tell the dog which way to go. Churchmen, too, are not quite free from this taint, but these are negligible in both quantity and quality. Since this element, as proved by its parliamentary representatives, predominates in Wales, Cornwall, South, West and North-west of Ireland, and in certain parts of Scotland, it seems to be the aboriginal dark race, whereas on the contrary in England and in the North-east of Ireland (where recruits are eighty per thousand), it is in a large minority. The present House of Commons confirms this since it has sent to the war about a hundred Unionists, but only twenty Liberals, though in proportion to the relative party strength their quota ought to be one hundred and thirty. It was thus proved that the Pacifist element which was responsible for the war was not taking anything like its proper share in national defence, and they clamoured against universal service because by it they would be forced to take their share of danger, and not sit at home making money out of the war. If it be said that the Quakers had sent out ambulances to the front, a fact which they loudly proclaimed, this was just as if a man who had set on fire a great and stately edifice, should then rush ostentatiously with a garden squirt to pour water on a small portion of it in a place where he might be seen by all.

But though the Quakers and other Pacifist Nonconformists declaimed against war, they never scrupled to make millions out of khaki, chocolate, jam, etc., and it must be remembered that alien financiers and great contractors have no strong interest in bringing the war to a speedy end. Under the volunteer system, for which they cried, they could shirk their due share of danger. The voluntary system, never a good one, had now become a great danger. Even the loss of the best stock in small wars, such as the Boer, was serious, but when in wars like the present, where the losses are so colossal, and all fall upon the best breeding stock of the race in all classes, the loss is infinitely more serious. We

must widen the basis for our supply of soldiers. Moreover, many of the brave women, probably for the most part the best stock in all classes, plighted to the fallen would never rear families, and thus the loss to the national stock is augmented. With the large relative increase of the Pacificist element the future of the race and nation will become still more critical. Firstly, we must limit the danger from the alien plutocrats. This can be in some degree diminished by abolishing naturalisation and making it impossible for a male descendant of such aliens to be made a knight, baronet, privy councillor, or peer, until at least the second generation. As the party leaders would thus be unable to requite the millionaire or his immediate descendants, this class of plutocrat would not exercise as baneful an influence as at present. But our chief hopes of safety must be in universal military service. The Germans and French find their strength in their devotion to their country, which at present stands above all factions, and this is the outcome of universal service, which places country above everything. But here party factions, sects, trades unions, and all sorts of fads are at this moment regarded as much more important than national safety by large sections of the community. Universal service would subordinate all to the one great idea. The physical advantage to the race of military training is as obvious in our new recruits as in the boy scouts, whilst by it we would add to the national forces a very large element which has hitherto not taken its share. Nor need these be frightened for their morals, since if our youths are trained in local centres they will be as safe as in the cricket field. Finally, there is the conscientious objection. Up to last year this had some force, but since the Quakers, the Baptists, and Congregationalists "longed to see the red blood flow in Ulster," and clamoured to have their law-abiding fellow citizens dragooned for purely sectarian purposes, their plea of conscience is now void. Those who are ready to set on civil war, when it suits party purposes, must be taught to be ready to keep out the foreign foe. By introducing compulsory service Mr. Asquith could at once largely augment the Army from his own supporters. If it be said that the quality would

be poor, the fact that not only Baptists and Congregationalists have gallantly enlisted, but that even some young Quakers have also joined the colours—to the consternation of their elders—shows that in not a few cases the baneful teaching (it may be reaching back for generations) has not succeeded in debasing the ancient English manhood. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that a brief training along with others brought up with more noble ideals would quickly awaken their dormant bravery and render a very large proportion of them excellent soldiers. But it is essential that they should be trained at once, for if they should be compelled to serve only as a last resort, when our best men have been exhausted, taken by themselves they would offer but a poor resistance to the Germans.